

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T CAIRO 07227

NODIS

CHEROKEE

FOR INR SAUNDERS ONLY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PGOV XF US EG
SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS STRATEGY

REF: (A) STATE 54290, (B) AMMAN 2110

1. WHEN READING REF A, I HAD SAME REACTION THAT ROY
ATHERTON AND HIS GROUP HAD ABOUT APPARENT INTENTION TO
POSTPONE COMING TO GRIPS WITH THE ISRAELIS ON THE ESSENTIAL
ISSUES. ROY HAS ELOQUENTLY MADE THE CASE AGAINST SUCH A
STRATEGY IN REF B. I CONCUR IN EVERYTHING SAID IN THAT
MESSAGE.

2. I CAN APPRECIATE OUR UNWILLINGNESS PUBLICLY OR PRI-
VATELY PORTRAY UPCOMING BEGIN VISIT AS CONFRONTATIONAL.
THERE MAY ALSO BE DOMESTIC FACTORS OF WHICH I AM NOT FULLY
AWARE THAT MAY MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO TAKE A STRONG LINE WITH
BEGIN ON THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES OF SETTLEMENTS, THE
APPLICABILITY OF UN RESOLUTION 242 TO ALL FRONTS, AND THE
PALESTINIAN ISSUE; BUT DEPT SHOULD BE IN NO DOUBT THAT TOP
EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP FROM SADAT ON DOWN EXPECT THAT

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PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY WILL VIGOROUSLY PURSUE THOSE
ISSUES AND MAKE IT CLEAR TO BEGIN THAT HIS PERTINENT
POSITIONS ARE UNACCEPTABLE. AS YOU KNOW, THERE IS CON-
SIDERABLE UNEASINESS ON PART OF TOP EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP
THAT, DESPITE OUR STRONG WORDS, WE WILL IN FACT WAVER WHEN
BEGIN ARRIVES AND TRY TO FINESSE THESE OUTSTANDING ISSUES.
IF WE DO SO, OUR CREDIBILITY HERE WILL BE BADLY DAMAGED,

AS WILL SADAT'S PERSONAL CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT CARTER
AND THE SECRETARY.

3. FONMIN KAMEL MADE THE POINT TO ROY ATHERTON TODAY THAT
IF BEGIN REFUSES TO GO ALONG WITH OUR VIEWS ON THESE THREE
CRITICAL ISSUES, HE HOPED USG WOULD USE OTHER MEANS
AVAILABLE TO US TO PERSUADE HIM. HE WAS NOT SPECIFIC,
BUT HE CLEARLY MEANT TANGIBLE PRESSURE. KAMEL MAY BE
ASKING MORE THAN WE CAN OR WOULD WISH TO DO. AS SEEN
FROM HERE, HOWEVER, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT AFTER BEGIN
VISIT WE BE ABLE TO MAKE DEMONSTRABLE CASE TO GOE THAT
WE HAVE INDEED HONORED OUR WORD TO SADAT AND AT THE
HIGHEST LEVELS OF USG VIGOROUSLY PRESSED ISRAELI PRIMIN
ON THESE THREE OUTSTANDING ISSUES. THE BEST WAY TO
DEMONSTRATE THIS WOULD, OF COURSE, BE SUCCESS IN
CHANGING BEGIN'S POSITION, BUT THIS IS PROBABLY ASKING TOO
MUCH. IT BECOMES ESSENTIAL IN THAT CASE THAT BEGIN VISIT
NOT CONCLUDE WITH HARMONIOUS REFRAIN THAT WE ARE IN TOTAL
AGREEMENT AND EXPECT OUTSTANDING ISSUES TO BE NEGOTIATED.
THE LATTER MAY BE TRUE, BUT IF OUR WORD IS TO CONTINUE TO
HAVE ANY IMPACT HERE, WE WILL HAVE TO SHOW THAT WE STOOD
UP STOUTLY FOR POSITIONS ARTICULATED PUBLICLY AND PRI-
VATELY BY PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE SECRETARY ON OUTSTAND-
ING ISSUES AND ARE NOT AFRAID TO LET OUR DIFFERENCES BE
KNOWN PUBLICLY AS WELL AS PRIVATELY. EILTS

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